



One of the treasures at Cullen Reserve is the endangered Little Dip Spider-orchid (*Caladenia richardsiorum*).

In addition to the Moorunde mallee reserves, we manage and maintain **Cullen Reserve**, a 29ha property adjacent to Lake Fellmongery, near the town of Robe about 300km southeast of Adelaide.

The property was gifted to the Society in 1969 by owners Dick and Ida Cullen, encouraged by their friend and local land agent Rick Cawthorne who was impressed by our efforts in establishing Moorunde. Cullen Reserve is maintained as a wildlife sanctuary.

This region of South Australia experiences heavier rainfall and milder climate than the semi-arid lands of our mallee reserves. There is an interesting and diverse range of flora and fauna, including the endangered Little Dip Spider-orchid (*Caladenia richardsiorum*) and the Bare-nosed Wombat (*Vombatus ursinus*). This species of wombat lives in the cooler climate of southeast South Australia, southern New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania.

Working bees are held twice yearly at Cullen Reserve with activities including weed control, fence repair and species surveys.



For more information on any aspect of the Society including volunteering, membership or donations visit our website or contact us via email, post or phone:

web nhssa.com.au
email info@nhssa.com.au
post **NHSSA Secretary**
10 Treetop Terrace
BELAIR SA 5052
phone **0417 881 658**



Like us on Facebook for frequent news and updates of our projects and activities.
www.facebook.com/nhssa



Mallee Ringneck Parrot (*Barnardius barnardi*) – one of the many delightful bird species found at the Moorunde Wildlife Reserve.



The majestic Wedge-tailed Eagle (*Aquila audax*) is the emblem of the Natural History Society of South Australia. In 1960, members mounted a campaign to prevent the destruction of these birds by pastoralists. The campaign was successful and the Wedge-tailed Eagle is now rightfully a protected species.

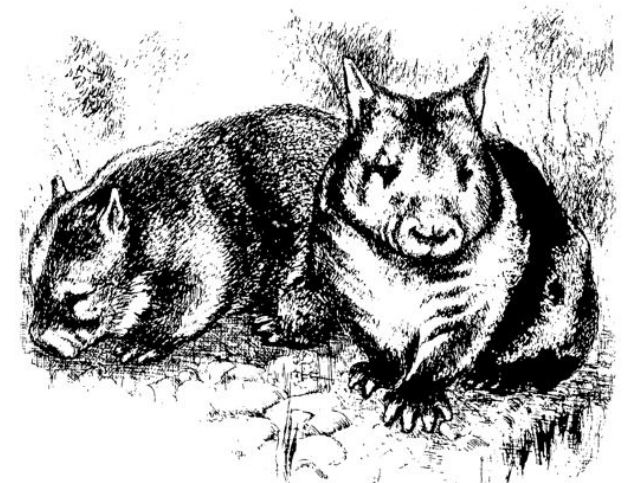
Cover illustration of Hairy-nosed Wombats drawn and kindly donated by artist, author and animal activist Ninon Phillips.

© Natural History Society of South Australia Inc. 2014

Natural History Society of South Australia



*protecting, promoting
and preserving our
unique flora and
fauna*



Southern Hairy-nosed Wombat (*Lasiorhinus latifrons*) – faunal emblem of South Australia and special focus of the Society.



The state of **South Australia** contains large areas of arid and semi-arid dry lands. At a glance, there may appear to be little in the way of wildlife. Closer inspection rewards the observer with a tremendous diversity of plants and animals.

There are many birds, reptiles, insects, mammals and plants that have evolved to thrive in this at times difficult environment. One of these animals, a large burrowing marsupial, the **Southern Hairy-nosed Wombat** (*Lasiorhinus latifrons*) is endemic to the semi-arid regions of Southern Australia. It is well adapted to these dry lands; by day sleeping in cool underground burrows and by night foraging for native grasses, all-the-while conserving precious moisture and energy.

Suitably, the Southern Hairy-nosed Wombat is the faunal emblem of South Australia and a focus animal for the **Natural History Society of South Australia**.

The **Natural History Society of South Australia** was formed in 1960 by a group of environmentalists keen to promote and raise public awareness of conservation and preservation of indigenous Australian flora and fauna through the maintenance and re-establishment of natural ecosystems and wiser land use.

Drought is a regular occurrence in much of South Australia, placing natural pressures on the native flora and fauna. However, when combined with inappropriate land clearing and habitat destruction, drought can lead to local extinction of native species.

In 1968, during a severe drought, wombat enthusiasts Mr and Mrs Jack Conquest approached the Society to launch an appeal. With tremendous public support and generosity, the appeal was a great success and raised the funds to establish the first Southern Hairy-nosed Wombat sanctuary, the **Moorunde Wildlife Reserve**.

Mallee: an amazingly biodiverse habitat of low growth, multi-stemmed Eucalypts, once covering vast areas of South Australia, now largely cleared for agriculture, often in marginally or non arable areas.

Moorunde Wildlife Reserve is located about 100km northeast of Adelaide, between Blanchetown and Swan Reach. The 1968 public appeal allowed the Society to purchase an area of about 2,000ha. In 2006, generous members and the Society's patron helped fund the purchase of an additional 4,900ha, bringing the total area of Moorunde Wildlife Reserve to almost 7,000ha.

The Society has also been gifted three additional properties in the vicinity of Moorunde, all to be maintained as wildlife reserves: **Nardoo** (190ha), **Lake Short** (34ha) and **Malurus** (30ha).

These reserves are located in **mallee** habitat on the western Murray plains, land between the Mount Lofty Ranges and the Murray River. This area is in the rain-shadow of the Mount Lofty Ranges so consequently rainfall is very low. The average annual rainfall is only about 250mm – around half that of Adelaide.

The area regularly experiences numerous consecutive years of drought with well below average rainfall. Native animals endemic to the area have evolved in these conditions. However, inappropriate land clearing in, what is at best, marginal farming land, introduced (often toxic) weeds and grazing competition from other animals all add to the pressure of daily survival.

Reduced, fragmented populations of Southern Hairy-nosed Wombats are now at higher risk of local extinction. By establishing and maintaining sanctuaries like Moorunde, these animals are given a chance to at least survive and possibly one day even thrive.



Southern Hairy-nosed Wombat (Lasiorhinus latifrons) at Moorunde Wildlife Reserve.

Regular Society events include Visitor & Volunteer weekends held once a month at Moorunde. Volunteers conduct weeding, animal surveys, fence repairs and general maintenance. Visitors are welcome so why not come along? Contact us for details.

We run a weekly ranger roster to ensure a regular presence at the reserves. Ranger duties include clearing tracks and checking fences are in order, recording rainfall measurements, making animal observations and reporting any issues of concern such as feral animals and weed outbreaks.

Numerous research projects are conducted by both Society members and visiting researchers. The following are just some of the different projects and activities:

- Wombat population estimation study
- Bird species observations and counts
- Grazing experiment assessing impact of different grazers
- Native grass enclosures for raising and harvesting grasses
- DNA analysis of wombat scat to determine diet
- Motion sensor cameras monitoring animal activity
- Photographic recording of native plants and animals
- Effective weeding techniques for different weed species

If you would like to become involved in any of these activities or show your support through membership or donation, please contact us – see back page for contact details.